



Future Gaming, largest electoral bonds donor, under agencies' lens

By [HT Correspondent](#)

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The company, run by Santiago Martin, also known as “lottery king,” bought bonds worth ₹1,368 crore between October 2020 and January this year



The company's website states that it is the leading player in the lottery industry of India, with a turnover of over \$2 bn. (Representative file photo)

Future Gaming and Hotel Services Private Limited, the largest contributor to the electoral bonds scheme, has been under the radar of multiple agencies including the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), the Enforcement Directorate (ED) and the Income Tax department for years.

The company, run by Santiago Martin, also known as “lottery king,” bought bonds worth ₹1,368 crore between October 2020 and January this year, according to 337-page data of donors made public by the Election Commission (EC) on Thursday.

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C. Sarojini Naidu

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Previously known as Martin Lottery Agencies Ltd, Future Gaming operated printing and selling lottery tickets in Tamil Nadu but later expanded the business to Kerala, Karnataka and later to the northeast.

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The company's website states that Future Gaming and Hotel Services Private Limited (earlier known as Martin Lottery Agencies Limited) is the leading player in the lottery industry of India, with a turnover of over \$2 billion.

A sister company, Future Gaming Solutions India Private Limited, registered at Coimbatore, was the distributor of paper lottery organised by Sikkim government.

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) started probing multiple cases related to Sikkim lotteries in 2011, in which it is alleged that Martin and associates made illegal profits of ₹910 crore between April 2009 and August 2010 by cheating the state government.

ED took up a money laundering probe against Future Gaming and Martin in 2019 based on seven charge sheets filed by the CBI in Sikkim lottery case.

ED found in its probe that Martin and his associates allegedly signed an agreement with officials in Sikkim in violation of existing rules to practically run the Sikkim State Lottery and avoid the remittance of the face value of the lottery tickets to the government. They also inflated the claims of prize-winning tickets, the agency said in a statement in July 2019 while attaching properties worth ₹119 crore including Martin's flats and plots.

In May 2019, the Income Tax department also raided around 70 premises linked to Martin, his associates and companies for alleged tax evasion.

ED claimed in a press statement in April 2022 that "Future Gaming and Hotel Services Pvt Ltd, its various sub-distributors, and area-distributors criminally conspired together and illegally retained unsold lottery tickets and claimed top prizes on such unsold tickets in the pre-GST period till 2017."

The sale proceeds of lottery tickets have been illegally diverted towards gifts and incentives by modifying the prize structure of lottery schemes without any approval from the state governments, it added.

The ED carried out fresh searches against Martin in May 2023 and has till date attached [properties](#) worth ₹457 crore.

An official, however, said that CBI, ED and IT probes "cannot be linked to the bond purchases as the company has been under the radar for very long for its lottery related irregularities."

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